

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 189

By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Thomas A. Varlan for
laudable service to the people of Tennessee and
to congratulate him upon his appointment to a
federal judgeship.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those
citizens who through their extraordinary efforts have distinguished themselves as public
servants of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Thomas A. Varlan, of Knoxville, whose
appointment to a federal judgeship was confirmed by the United States Senate on March 13,
2003; and

WHEREAS, born in Oak Ridge, Mr. Varlan is a graduate of Bearden High School, the
University of Tennessee and Vanderbilt University's School of Law, where he was a member of
the Order of the Coif and served as the managing editor of the *Vanderbilt Law Review*; and

WHEREAS, while a student at the University of Tennessee, Thomas Varlan took the first
steps in his career in public service as an intern for then State Senator Victor Ashe; and

WHEREAS, upon his graduation from Vanderbilt Law School, Mr. Varlan served as a attorney with the firm of Sutherland, Asbill and Brennan in Atlanta, practicing law with particular emphases on employment issues, school law and business litigation matters; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, Thomas Varlan's old friend and now Knoxville's Mayor, Victor Ashe, convinced Mr. Varlan to leave private practice and to reenter the public sector as Knoxville's Law Director, in which position he oversaw all of the city's legal, risk management and medical services functions; and

WHEREAS, as Knoxville's Law Director, Mr. Varlan astutely administered the department's ten million dollar budget and was actively involved in approximately 200 litigation cases relating to civil rights, annexation, tax matters, zoning, condemnation, employment liability and a wide range of constitutional and statutory issues; in several of these cases, he successfully defended the City of Knoxville against multimillion dollar lawsuits; and

WHEREAS, after serving as City Law Director for ten years, Thomas Varlan returned to private practice in 1998 as a partner in the firm of Bass, Berry and Sims in Knoxville, where his practice areas included governmental relations, civil litigation, labor and employment law and representation of quasi-governmental corporations; and

WHEREAS, a prominent figure in Tennessee's legal community, Mr. Varlan has served as President of the Tennessee Municipal Attorneys Association, as President of the Strategic Planning Committee of the International Municipal Lawyers Association, as Chair of the Tennessee Bar's Section of Litigation and as a Member of the Tennessee Advisory Commission for Intergovernmental Relations; he has also represented several nonprofit corporations in a broad range of corporate matters; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his career as an attorney, Thomas Varlan still has found time to lend his remarkable talents to such notable causes as the Knoxville Area Chamber of Commerce, the University of Tennessee College of Arts and Sciences, Leadership Knoxville,

youth soccer and basketball leagues, the Knoxville Bar Association's Mentor for the Moment Program and Volunteer Legal Arts Services in Atlanta; and

WHEREAS, Thomas A. Varlan is most grateful for the love and companionship he shares with his wife, Danni, and their four children, Susanna, Georgia, Paul and Alex; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Varlan epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean, and it is only fitting that these qualities, in conjunction with his reputation for professional excellence and personal integrity, should be recognized by President Bush and the United States Senate and rewarded with a lifetime appointment to a judgeship on the U.S. District Court; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Mr. Varlan for his dedication to the citizens of Tennessee and to equitable administration of justice; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Thomas A. Varlan for his meritorious service to the people of Tennessee, congratulate him upon his appointment to the bench of the United States District Court and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.